

# **Farm Roots and Family Ties**

## **HISTORIC RESOURCE STUDY**

**The Harry S Truman Grandview Farm,  
the Wallace Houses, and the Noland House in Independence**

**Harry S Truman National Historic Site  
Grandview and Independence, Missouri**


**by**

**Gail E.H. Evans-Hatch and D. Michael Evans-Hatch**

**Evans-Hatch & Associates  
Silverton, Oregon  
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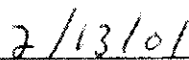
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Superintendent, Harry S Truman NHS

  
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**Approved:**

  
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Regional Director, Midwest Region

  
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## Preface

Between 1989 and 1993, Congress authorized the acquisition of four properties for inclusion into the existing Harry S Truman National Historic Site, created in 1983, and managed by the National Park Service.<sup>1</sup> In 1989, Public Law 101-105 (codified at Title 16 United States Code Section 461 [b]),<sup>2</sup> provided for the addition of the Natalie and Frank Wallace home, the May and George Wallace home, and the Noland home to the Truman National Historic Site. The National Park Service acquired all three properties, totaling .63 acres, in 1991. The two Wallace homes, each encompassing around .22 acres, stand on adjacent lots at 601 West Truman Road (Natalie and Frank Wallace house) and 605 West Truman Road (May and George Wallace house.) Following their addition to the national historic site, the Wallace properties, along with the Truman home, formed one contiguous parcel comprised of 1.21 acres. The Noland house, located on .19 acres at 216 North Delaware Street, stands directly across the street from the Truman house.<sup>3</sup>

In 1993, Congress authorized the acquisition and addition of the Harry S Truman Farm to the Truman National Historic Site. Public Law 103-184 (codified at Title 16 United States Code Section 461 [c]) amended the original congressional legislation that had established the Truman National Historic Site. Located about fifteen miles south of Independence, in Grandview, Missouri, this approximate 5.2-acre agricultural parcel, encompasses the Young-Truman farmhouse, several outbuildings and other existing cultural features, and archaeological evidence of other cultural features no longer existing. (The Solomon Young Farm, located at 12121 and 12301 Blue Ridge Extension Road, had been previously nominated to the National Register of Historic Places in 1978. It was upgraded to National Historic Landmark status in 1985 as the Harry S Truman Farm.)

All four properties are intimately associated with the life of Harry S Truman. As a young child, Truman spent two years living on his grandparents' Grandview farm, a large and prosperous Jackson County family operation that had been owned and enlarged several times by Truman's maternal grandparents, Solomon and Harriet Young. Harry Truman

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<sup>1</sup> In May 1983, Public Law 98-32 (97 Stat. 193) provided for the inclusion of the Truman National Historic Site in the National Park system.

<sup>2</sup> Representative Wheat sponsored bill H 419 in the House and Senator Bond sponsored bill S 109 in the Senate, which later became this public law.

<sup>3</sup> The Wallace homes and the Noland house had been previously included in the Truman National Historic Landmark District, nominated to the National Register of Historic Places in 1971.

returned to the Grandview farm in 1906 as a young man, and managed the farming operation during the "golden age" of farming in the United States, first with his father and then alone. Truman's nine-year courtship of Bess Wallace, his future wife, began while he lived on the Truman Farm. In 1917, Truman left the farm to enter active military service during World War I.

Throughout his life, Harry Truman spent many hours visiting his favorite aunt, Ella Truman Noland, and her two daughters, Nellie and Ethel. Ella and Joseph Noland and Nellie and Ethel moved into an old Queen Anne-style house at 216 North Delaware in 1900 and purchased it in 1908. Three generations of the Noland family owned and occupied the Noland house for over eighty-five years. Throughout his life, including his presidency, Harry Truman visited and regularly communicated with Ella Noland as well as Nellie and Ethel, both public school educators in Independence and Kansas City for sixty years. At Harry Truman's request, Ethel Noland became an authority on Truman family genealogy and the family history spokesperson.

The two Wallace properties were the homes of Harry S Truman's brothers-in-law and their wives. At the time of their marriages in 1915 and 1916, Frank and George Wallace erected modest Bungalow-style houses on land just to the east of the Gates family home and on land once used by the family for a garden and grazing. Natalie Ott and Frank Wallace as well as May Southern and George Wallace resided in their homes at 601 and 605 West Truman Road, which adjoined the Truman home, or "Summer White House," during their entire married lives. The two Wallace couples, Harry and Bess Truman, and Margaret spent hours socializing in and around the two Wallace houses, in what became known as the "Wallace compound." Following the death of Frank and Natalie Wallace in 1960, Bess Truman and May Wallace managed that property. After George Wallace's death in 1963, May Wallace continued to live at home and remained close to and supportive of both of the Trumans until their deaths in 1972 and 1983. May Wallace left her home at 605 West Truman Road for the last time in late 1989, and died four years later.

## Acknowledgements

A project of this size and scope relies heavily on the contributions of many. We wish to gratefully acknowledge and heartily thank the helpful assistance given to us by: Liz Safly, Dennis Bilger, and Pauline Testerman at the Harry S. Truman Library of the National Archives branch in Independence; Janet Russell at the Jackson County Historical Society in Independence; Patrick Steele, historic preservation planner for the City of Independence; and several reference librarians, too numerous to name, at the Genealogy and Local History Branch of the Mid-Continent Library in Independence, the Missouri Valley Collection of the Kansas City Public Library, the Missouri State Archives in Jefferson City, and the Williamson County Library, as well as the Herrin Public Library, and the Herrin High School Library in Herrin, Illinois. Everyone in the office of the *Jackson County Advocate* in Grandview, Missouri, made a special and generous effort to provide us with numerous original photographs that had previously appeared in that newspaper. We wish to thank James D. Turnbaugh, editor and publisher, Agnes Ann Turnbaugh, co-publisher, Joseph D. Turnbaugh, reporter and photographer, and Annette M. Turnbaugh, account executive for the jovial and generous assistance. Not only did these journalists scour their archives for photographs, but they also provided a wealth of information derived from their years of dedicated journalism in western Missouri.

Most of the other photographs and illustrations that appear in this historic resource study are housed at the Harry S. Truman Library and the Jackson County Historical Society.

Numerous individuals gave us abundant information during oral history interviews and through long-distance communication (in letters, e-mail messages, and telephone conversations). Five individuals kindly granted us permission to tape-record our interviews with them during the summer and fall of 2000, including: Richard Jaques and his wife, Jane; Bill and Mary Ellen Carnes; Dr. Gerald Anderson; William and Annette Curtis; Sterling Goddard; and John Southern. Several others cheerfully responded to our long-distance research questions. These include: Betty B. Matthews, Shelbyville, Kentucky; Roy and Carol Romine, Greenwood, Indiana; Roy Hornbuckle, Raytown, Missouri; Howard Woodruff, Independence; Milton Parks, Blackjack, Missouri; James Weber, Independence; Mike Manners, Independence; and Eric Fowler, Independence.

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We heartily thank all these individuals. We alone, however, take full responsibility for any errors of fact or interpretation contained on these pages.



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